

I write to urge you to reject the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking #02-230, which would limit the functionality of digital television sets. As currently constructed, this "broadcast flag" proposal would hamper innovation in digital televisions and other electronic equipment capable of receiving digital broadcasts.

To say that i cannot record a show of Everybody Loves Raymond that i am missing due to work travel etc. is a little overboard. I would never buy a copy of the show from anybody at any amount of money. England in the 1760 and 1770's attempted to tax the colonies of the Americas when they found out that they could tax this cash cow. We all know what happened then. I would not say that a revolution would begin. But come on, how much money would they make.

The same ideas apply to MP3 and DVD downloading. I would never but an Eminem CD nor many of the movies that i could download. So to say that i can not listen or watch these works is just telling me that i should make all efforts not to buy watch or support the people behind the skimming. An example of this is that when napster first began and many people began downloading mp3's record sales went up. Today, i will never buy another Metallica CD again. Reason, they tried to put limits on a technology that actually helped the business.

The same ideas of copying and having cassetts existed in the 80's and 90's in which record companies did not compete. We could get a copy, but its still not thre real thing. And the only thing i ever download from my computer are things i would never buy, or things i already have and want in mp3 format.

The broadcast flag proposal before the commission was the product of the "Broadcast Protection Discussion Group," an select group of industry insiders who brokered the deal. It would be unfortunate if the FCC were to codify this pact at the expense of consumer flexibility and choice.

While piracy is a valid concern, it is not the only issue that should be considered. Entertainment industry protections must be weighed against consumers' freedom to purchase and employ technology to enhance and utilize content. If enacted, the broadcast flag proposal would ignore these concerns and turn technological development over to an all-powerful subset of the entertainment industry.

In recent years, the entertainment industry has become acutely aware of the challenges it faces in the digital era. But these challenges do not give it the right to restrict consumers' abilities to record their favorite programs, or purchase electronic devices that allow them to record and save memorable family moments. The market is best suited to address and weigh these competitng concerns and the FCC should give it time to work - particularly in a nascent industry like digital television -- before handing over consumer autonomy to the whims of entertainment industry executives.